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PAUL HAZLITT DAVIS.

"I very well agree with you in hopes of him."—*Winter's Tale.*

KNICK-KNACKS

BY

HAZLITT ALVA CUPPY

INDIANAPOLIS

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BY
HAZLITT ALVA CUPPY.

DEDICATED

TO

PAUL HAZLITT DAVIS

THE

SON OF MY FRIEND

NOTE.

Some of the selections which follow have appeared in various publications over Mr. Cuppy's name, or H. R. Knox of Amity. Others Mr. Cuppy has recited with success in different parts of this country, and in London and Oxford while studying at that ancient university. The reception which has been accorded them has led us to present them before the public in their present form.

THE PUBLISHERS.

PREFACE.

It is that season of the year when nature has just cleaned house, and spread broadcast beneath trees, beautifully decorated with green foliage, her carpets of green velvet. I am on the banks of the Neckar, in one of the most unique, as well as one of the most beautiful, of gardens. Lying on the cushioned earth, breathing the sweet fragrance of the lilacs and the apple blossoms, stealing an hour from the busiest year of my student life, I am to write a preface—that part of a volume no one reads, except the proofreader. I have no excuse to make for perpetrating upon the public this little volume. Let him who would crush, under his heel, the sprouting oak, because it did not spring from the ground a full grown tree; let him who would pluck the buds away because they are not full grown flowers, cut what plumes I feign would grow, away. O thou critic,

art thou man or beast or devil, or some crude combination of the three. By what right do you judge men, play upon their heartstrings, sound their depths, from what vantage ground do you pose, to guide men's likes, and their fancies? As I tossed upon my pillow, I thought I saw the ghost of Keats, and it branded you a murderer; then I woke and knew I had been dreaming, for no criticism killed Keats, it was want of love. But this want never was known to kill a critic.

Birds that never try weak wings will never fly. Flowers that never bud will never bloom. First the misty dawn, and then the full blaze of the noon. Then don't expect from youthful efforts what you would from manhood's prime.

It is sufficient to say, regarding the selections in dialect, that I was born in a modest cabin, in one of the back counties of Indiana, and heard nothing else during my early childhood.

Fortunately my hour is up, and I must off to my next lecture in the University.

HAZLITT ALVA CUPPY.

Ville Felseck, May 20th, 1892.

Heidelberg, Germany.

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PART I.



KNICK-KNACKS.

I KNOW

I know when angels weep.
By my window grew a primrose,
Sweetly innocent of foes,
Sweetly innocent of woes,
Which the future so oft throws
In a life where virtue glows.
But a man of gold arose,
And my little rose he chose;
And we sold it for the rows
Of the glittering gold he throws
At our feet. Yes, God knows!
I know when angels weep.

I know when angels weep.
By my own life once there grew,
One so innocent and true,
One whose nature sparkled too,

Like the tiny drops of dew
Kissing the sunbeams, painted new
By the dawn they're darting through.
What we do we can't undo!
A stranger one day riding through,
With much gold began to sue;
And we—and we—sold her too!
I know when angels weep.

THE SUMMUM BONUM.

I searched among the rubies for the gem of
greatest price,
I sought among the virtues for a balm for
every vice,
I sought the *summum bonum* of the future
and to-day,
A something that belonged to the All-eter-
nal sway,
That which is of God and humanity a part,
That which deigns to delve in the deeps of
every heart.
The one connecting thread of the future and
the past,
Eureka, I have found it! hear the trum-
pet's joyful blast.
Piercing heaven and earth and the starry
depths above
This message to all ages—*The eternal thing*
is love.

MUSINGS.

One day as I sat me musing,
Vacancy alone perusing;
Idly dreaming of to-morrow
And the joys from it I'd borrow,
Suddenly I saw a vision;
Outlined there in great precision,
In two little drops of water;
In two crystal drops of water,
Just outside my garden window,
I saw Cupid with his bow,
And the prettiest little fairy
Clad in costume lithe and airy.
Well, thought I, I'll watch you two,
Watch the cup of love you brew.
First he bowed to her quite low,
From his crystal drop you know,
She with modest winsome grace
Shyly turned aside her face
Half repelling, yet inviting
With her blushes, thus inciting
Cupid's homage from the start;
For his shaft pierced heart and heart.
As I sat debating whether
I should roll the drops together,
Lo, a sunbeam from the sun
And the zephyrs made them one,

And I thought I heard him whisper
As he stooped and fondly kissed her:
“Thus, my dear, is all true love
Kissed by sunbeams from above.”

MY REVENGE.

So fair to see;
 So dear to me.
I told her so, but don't you know
She'd "never thought of that."

I told her how
 That even now
I loved her so; she said "no, no,"
She "couldn't think of that."

Myself I manned,
 I took her hand
And held it long, and breathed a song
That she should yet be mine.

I plead my cause
 Until my jaws
Refused to ope'. Deceitful hope
That lead me on to this.

She seemed so glad
 To feel so bad,
That I got mad (unseemly lad)
And flung her hand away.

"Sorry for you,
Am sorry too;
But I can't do, what I might rue,
For any man," she said.

* * * * *

Since last we met,
Altho' her net
Is ever set, I don't forget
That she's not married yet.

AT FELSECK.

Here are clumps of trees, where the gentle
breeze

Makes love to the leaves all day ;
And the sweet perfume of the lilac's bloom,
As the zephyrs steal it away ;
And the warbling notes, from the little
throats,

Which make up Earth's orchestra ;
And the heliotrope, with its mission of
hope,

As it pleads in its fragrant way.
Here the daisies pose, near the budding
rose,

Where the midday shadows play.
When the sun lies down, in his great red
crown,

And the queen of night rides o'er,
In the moon-light pale, then the nightin-
gale

Perches just before our door,
Where he sits and sings, and his clear note
rings,

While the stars are out on parade ;
E'en the dawn is stayed, by his music
swayed

'Till the sun's again arrayed,

In his rope of light ; then the dawn takes
flight,

While the songster seeks some shade.
So the flowers, and trees, and the birds
and bees,

And the good things Nature's made,
Have stolen my heart, from the very first
start,

It's much better than I've portrayed.

UNDER THE MAGNOLIA.

Love came to me on the wings of morn,
Breathing the sweets of the Seraph's song:
Fresh and pure, as the lily white—
A very angel in its flight.

I swore to resist her charms and smiles,
And put her away with the afterwhiles;
But against her arts I strove in vain,
For Cupid had wrought his golden chain.

And I was bound, yes, heart and soul,
Through life, in death, for in yon green
 knoll
O'erhung by the sweet magnolia tree,
Lies—yes, my love and me.

IN EAST LONDON.

Come, my child, I know you're cold, don't
cry !

Yesterday I staggered out seeking bread.
At length I came upon a church, where
prayers are said ;

It seems, my child, the love of God took
wings and fled ;

For those worshipers were cold, their hearts
are dead !

Come, my child, I know you're cold, don't
cry !

Come, my child, I know you're cold, don't
cry !

It's not given me to understand why,
For want of warmth and bread, you and I
must die ;

Perchance our death will soften some poor
heart that's dry—

Would that those, who have to spare, could
feel thy sigh !

Come, my child, I know you're cold, don't
cry !

Come, my child, I know you're cold, don't
cry!

Christ was poor, he may have hungered,
and been cold.

Some who worship in fine clothes, forget
He told

A certain one to sell his goods, and give
his gold

To the poor; O God, has love's death knell
been tolled?

Come, my child, I know you're cold, don't
cry!

TO PESSIMISTS.

Don't growl at the clouds, there's sun
 'tween the showers,
Haven't we thistles and thorns along with
 the flowers?
He's a fool who plucks nothing but thorns
 on the way,
Leaving fresh blooming flowers to wither
 away;
Shame on the growler and pessimist too,
If God has regrets, 'tis because he made
 you.

IN THE READING ROOM OF THE
BRITISH MUSEUM.

How I love to delve and finger
Books of quaint historic lore,
How I love to read and linger
O'er events of days of yore.

And I love to glean from pages
Of the world's historic past,
All that's best in all her stages;
All that bears eternal cast.

Yet, methinks as now I wander
Through the things which I have read;
As I think and weigh and ponder
What great men have done and said,

That this earth is but the foreground,
But a busy training school,
Where all shades and grades abound
From wise men down to the fool.

What is life but our great teacher
Pointing us to higher things?
Conscience pleads with every creature,
'Tis the devil's sting that stings.

Then what is the highest duty ?

Hath man power to guide his life,
Spurn the dross and choose but beauty,
Wave aside this constant strife ?

Would the oak then be the stronger,
Not to force its roots in earth,
Would its branches wave the longer,
Not to battle from their birth ?

No, the conflicts each encounters,
If he battles with his might,
Only test that power which conquers,
They can never crush him quite.

Hope, white winged, o'er us hovers,
Hope peeps from each little flower ;
She, in each, some good discovers,
And she wields a blessed power.

Life is largely what we make it ;
We may gather thorns alone.
But forget not such a transit
Makes life one continual groan.

Virtue, truth, and right we'll cherish,
With the best, of all earth gives.
Such a life will never perish,
Through eternity it lives.

THE VERSE-MAKER'S APOLOGY.

Let him who reads my modest verse,
 Not judge them quick ;
 Lest judgment be perverse.
 I grant they are not terse ;
 But rough and thick ;
But poorest rhymes might still be worse.

Could I so guide this pen in line,
 Shape thought and word,
 Or mold in phrases fine,
 In terse and gentle rhyme,
 Quite clean, unblurred,
Those thoughts which crowd this soul of
 mine,

I'd hold 'mong men, a place to-day
 Such thoughts deserve.
 Yet thoughts in thick array
 Can not be hid away,
 Perhaps they swerve ;
Still one may find their pent up ray.

Some see the form of what they read
And nothing more,
And haste with cruel speed,
And most unmanly greed,
To loudly roar
To all the world our glaring need.

Some read only our faults to find,
Poor silly fools,
With thoughts to dross inclined
Their heads are always primed,
They're Fads, poor tools,
They are and will be always blind.

And so, most men see but one phase
Of what they see.
They grope in narrow ways
Unconscious, all their days,
That truth, to be
Full truth, must gather all the rays.

I would we were, as some have said,
Not what we *are*,
But that which, if we're led
By hope's eternal thread—
Our guiding star—
We *may be*, if we push ahead.

There is no man who's wholly naught;
His manhood slain,
A spark is there; if sought
Perchance it may be brought
To life again.
Don't crush him, for his every fault.

Condemn, then, not these modest rhymes,
Unworthy things;
May be to other minds
These awkward little lines
Some comfort brings.
'Tis enough if *one* heart something finds.

Let him who would as critic pose
See every side.
The thorns grow with the rose;
Bad form quite often goes
And need we chide,
With thoughts which scarce their tend
disclose.

DESPAIR VERSUS HOPE.

Despair sits on a hollow tomb
And mocks me by the hour;
Hope alone dispels the gloom,
She wields the better power.

CUPID'S PLAY.

Two little hearts, like drops of dew
Lay sparkling in the sun;
Cupid aimed his shaft so true
He bound them into one.

POETS.

We silly rhymsters sing and sing,
And think we make our music ring
The world around.

We twang our lyre—poor little thing,
And yet Old Time will only bring
A little mound.

PART II. IN DIALECT.



MARCH.

Growl at March if you will;
Jes go and rack your brain,
Frown, murmur an' complain;
Say, thare's allus too much rain,
Er thare hit's snowin' again:
Jes carry on like one insane
Until you jes git your fill.

March suits me well as not;
Whare'd you git a grander sight,
Er what could give us more delight
Than out in the sugar camp some night
A-stirrin' off and holdin' tight
The wax we pull with all our might?
March suits me well as not.

March suits me well as not;
Hit seems like sunshine a-slippin' through
The clouds o' winter fer me an' you;
A-meltin' the frost an' kissin' the dew:
Bringin' the maple buds out too,
Ah, what's the use o' gittin' blue?
March suits me well as not.

Growl at March if you will,
An' preach that hit 's all wrong;
Alone, I'll bet you're carryin' on.
Do the birds murmur in their song,
Er complain when hit snows along
In March? But fret an' ding-dong
Until you jes git your fill.

THEM WILD GEESE.

Heerd wild geese, agin to-day,
Seven times, I've heerd 'em holler,
An' you know what's goin' to foller;
Hit means 'at fall has had her sway
An' winter's comin', right away.

Fer forty years I've watched their flight,
Towards the north every spring,
Allus strung out in a string,
Some old gander in his might
A-leadin' the others, day an' night.

You ort to see 'em, as they fly,
An' hear their gander, in goose talk,
A-makin' the others walk the chalk.
W'y, they allus as they fly,
Skute along, up thare so high,
'At you jes can hear their cry.

Jes the same in fall er spring,
Goin' north or goin' south;
Hit matters not, they use their mouth
Warnin' people as they sing,
Way up thare on the wing.

So it is, with every thing
 Drawin' breath on top of earth,
 They have a purpose from their birth;
Some mission, to the world to bring,
Summer, winter, fall er spring.

Hits jes the same with you, er me,
Thare's allus plenty little things,
Ef we but do them, don't you see,
As we ort, we hold the key
To a safe eternity.

THE PUNKIN.

You may talk of the apple, the peach, er
the pear,
Er cherries, er blackberries, I don't care;
Jes brag of yer tropical fruits from afar,
Er the juicy ripe grapes in yer fruit agent's
jar,
But I'll sing of a fruit 'at beats 'em all;
'Tis the punkin, gethered yaller, 'long in
the fall.

I like to go out when they're shuckin' the
corn,
'Long airly in the evenin' er late in the
morn,
An' toss in the punkins on top of the load,
An' watch thare yaller sides as they go
down the road:
So I'll sing of the punkin, the joy of my
heart,
Which my appetite craves a good 'eal—a
right smart.

Jes think o' thim sliced into strips nice an'
thin
A-swingin' from the ceilin' by a string!
Hit's a sin

The way I like punkin all dried nice an'
brown,
Fer hit's better'n 'em fruits 'at you git in
yer town;
So I'll sing of the punkin, the joy of my
heart,
Which my appetite craves a good 'eal—a
right smart.

An' 'n when the ground's all covered with
snow,
Thare's nuthin' from the kitchen 'at tickles
me so,
As a great fat slice of good punkin pie—
Hush, when I have none, hit makes me
sigh—
But I'll sing of a fruit 'at beats 'em all;
'Tis the punkin, gethered yaller, 'long in
the fall.

THE OFFICE SEEKER.

Our Mister President,—Dear Sir,
I sez's soon as this 'lection stir
Is quieted down a leetle, I'll
Jes put my pen an' ink on trial,
To write you, General, about a few
O' the trials we had, a 'lectin' you.

But I've jes bin so bizzy here;
You know 'at jes this time o' year
Hog killin' comes—I wished 'at you
Could taste the sausage, 'at my Sue
Fixed up, er some fresh tenderline
Jes like she fries here all the time.

An' after hog killin', the corn's to gether,
An' 'at took time, an' I didn't know whether
I'd git to write to you at all;
A right smart chance o' rain this fall,
Has kept me back a leetle, yit
Rain er shine, I had to git.

Fer up to 'lection time, you know,
I hadn't done a thing, but go
To speakin's, er lazed around the town,
A-talkin' politics to Brown;
Now Brown's a red hot Democrat,
An' swears he'll allus stick to that.

He takes keer o' the mails, an' keeps
The store, an' has fer weeks an' weeks,
But now then, as like as enny way,
You'll turn him out some rainy day.
I jes wished you would, fer he
Is as mean as a Democrat can be.

W'y he made all sorts o' fun,
An' yelled an' laughed at every one
Who said a word fer you er me—
I run for marshal don't you see?
I got beat, but I don't keer
Jes so you can take your cheer.

Now I've heerd hit talked as how
I'd make a first-class man, jes now,
To keep the office in place of Brown,
But 'at's jes idle talk, in town
I guess. La sakes, how he'd whine!
But I don't keer, 'taint half the time

We git our mail, jes as we ort,
But Brown, you know, is jes that sort
A feller, 'at haint got no sense
About some things, 'specially expense,
W'y he don't keer no more fer that,
Than some big boodle Democrat.

What I said, I'll stick to yit,
I wouldn't give a straw fer hit,
But ef no other man is found
In the country er the town,
Ruther 'an leave it with old Brown
I'll try an' hold the office down.

WINTER.

'Long this winter, I haint been doin' much
But jes piddle' round, chop wood an' feed.
I made Tom Markham's boy a krutch,
An' a sled for Marg'ret Reed.

I've done my chores around the house,
Mended up my geers, sharpened up my
tools,
Fixed traps to ketch a rat er mouse,
An' sheared my naber's mules.

Now I like winter, jes cause hit's cold;
I like a great big rousin' fire
That I can poke an' hear hit scold—
Hit's much as I desire.

'Tis then we have our milk an' mush,
An' make our taffy, an' pull hit too,
Pop our corn an' stir hit in—hush!
Hush, I'm gettin' blue!

* * * * *

But I like winter with her long nights
Of frolic an' fun, with nothin' to do
But jes laz 'round an' keep up lights,
An' poke the fires an'—don't you?

Is the ant lazy 'cause she don't work
In winter, er is the bee a drone?
Er is old slick tailed 'possum a shirk,
Fer lazin' in his home?

Does he cuss winter, er frown er fret?
Does he growl at ice er git blue,
An' hang his head an' froth an' sweat,
Like some good men 'ill do?

Winter's my choice, as I hev said,
An' my next best I guess is fall,
But spring an' summer I don't dread,
I'll say I like 'em all.

JIM

Thare warn't no idler feller 'an Jim;
Jes so idle 'at he got tired

A-bein idle.

Lazed around, had no vim,
Ner nuthin'; w'y, ef he got mired

You'd jes sidle

Up an' yank him out,
Then feel like kickin' the little sprout.

I know we all felt sorry fer him,
An' kept perdictin' 'at he'd die

With sheer laziness;

Nobody couldn't do nothin' with Jim;
Wouldn't work, ner wouldn't try;

Hit crazed us

Nabers to see that feller
A-growin' up so soft an' meller.

But up he growed, short an' thin,
An' finally tuck to readin' books,

An' givin' shows;

Thare warn't no better acter'n Jim:
Jes bend hisself in double crooks,

Use his toes

Fer stilts, an' mabbe roll
Hissself like lightnin' 'round a pole:

Swing his toes across a lim'
Let loose his han's an' hang down,
 Skin a cat,
Balance a cheer on his chin,
With heels up an' han's down;
 Jes like that
He'd run all over town;
W'y, he's better'n any clown.

Hours an' hours I talked to him;
'Twarn't no use, done no good;
 I lost hope;
Then, says I to our nabers, Jim
Is lost, I've done all I could;
 I fear a rope,
Says I to my wife,
Will end that poor feller's life.

Kept on a-readin' books did Jim,
An' finally tuck to paintin' signs
 On the fences.

Done his work as neat an' trim
As anybody. Made the dimes
 An' all expenses;

Quit a-bein' lazy
An' tuck to paintin' like he's crazy.

But that didn't last long with him,
He soon jined a medicine band
A-travelin' through.

Then, says I, hit's good-by Jim,
We'll trust you to a wiser hand.

'Twas somethin' new;
He scored a big success,
Spoke several poems, too, I guess,

Pieces of rhyme, which 'at fool Jim
Had writ hisself, then hired out

Fer to write
Locals an' sich things as thim
'At he could pick up thare about

Day er night;
Kept on readin' an' writin',
Composin' poems, an' recitin'

'Em at took the people's whim,
Then tuck to travelin' up an' down

The whole state,
An' everybody a-callin' fer him,
An' every cussed little town

Would allers rate
Jim above 'em all;
Him 'at 's so idle when he's small.

I never thought hit wus in him
To write a book—yit he did

More an' one.

He wrote, did 'at idle Jim,
An' with his writin' he jes' rid

O'er every one.

By Junks! I allers grin
A-thinkin' what's done up in him.

I've learned a lesson a-watchin' Jim;
Don't condemn yer naber's son,

Like me, too quick;

No tellin' what's 'rapt up in him;
Jes wait until his race is run,

Fer that stick,

As you an' me 'ud say,
May turn out quite well some day.



KNICK-KNACKS.

BY

HAZLITT ALVA CURRY



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